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CIA TURNCOAT

A Man of Profound Detachment

By Thomas O'Toole
and Charles R. Babcock
Washington Post Staff Writers

When David Henry Barnett was growing up in Robinson Township outside Pittsburgh, he went to a school so small he had only one classmate. The class ahead of him had three pupils, one of them Pennsylvania Gov. Richard Thornburgh.

Barnett's lone classmate, Caroline Patsch, said the last time she saw him was at Thornburgh's inauguration in 1979. "I kidded him about being such a stuffed shirt," Patsch said from her home in Rosslyn Farms, Pa., "because he looked so serious."

Pausing, Patsch grew serious. "I think I was the closest one to him in the school, and I don't feel like I ever knew him. Dave Barnett always looked like he had a secret."

Barnett's secret is out. He has been indicted and has pleaded guilty to a charge he took \$92,600 from the Soviet KGB [committee of state security] in exchange for details of a top-secret covert operation the United States ran against the Soviets in Indonesia; the names of 30 Indonesians the CIA paid to help in the operation; the identities and personality traits of undercover CIA employees; and the identities of Soviet diplomats the CIA had targeted for possible recruitment.

Now 47, David Henry Barnett is the first CIA officer to be charged with espionage since the agency was created in 1947. He faces weeks of grilling by the FBI and the CIA to find out everything he told the Soviets and everything he remembers about the Soviets to whom he told it. He will do his talking hooked to a lie detector, which will be watched by the FBI's foremost polygraph expert. Even if the FBI is satisfied he is telling the truth, Barnett faces life imprisonment. Twenty years ago, Barnett could have been executed.

What would make a man who served the CIA in undercover operations for 12 years turn to the Soviets and "give them the store?" In talks with people he knew as a youngster, with friends he made later in life, with former officers of the CIA who knew him and with

FBI and Justice Department sources who helped prosecute him, a picture emerges of a man so detached, so aloof, so unfeeling that he may not realize the gravity of what he did.

"Dave Barnett is the least analytical man I know," said one neighbor of his last week. "I've never met a man as detached as he is from the things that go on around him."

Barnett grew up in Robinson Township, a tiny rural community southwest of Pittsburgh where people know each other all their lives. The house he lived in is no longer there. It burned down several years ago in a tragic fire that killed his father. His mother had died earlier. When Barnett visits Pittsburgh, he stays with an uncle.

The Rosslyn Farms school Barnett attended is still there but it's not a school anymore. When it was a school, Rosslyn Farms had four classrooms for eight grades, two grades to a classroom. In a setting like that, one would think youngsters would grow very close.

"Not David," Caroline Patsch remembers. "He lived in his own little world."

Barnett attended Mercersburg Academy, then enrolled at the University of Michigan, from which he was graduated in 1955. He served in the Army, then came to Washington where he was hired by the CIA as a contract employee instructing recruits at Camp Peary, Va. He left the agency in May 1960, was rehired in June 1961 and became a staff officer in March 1963. He left immediately for Indonesia, where he went under cover in an operation codenamed HABRINK. He told friends he was going to Korea as a government interpreter.

Just before he left for Indonesia, Barnett met Sarah Blount, who came from Michigan and was working on Capitol Hill. In a week, they were engaged. They were married before he left the United States.

At the time Barnett was involved, HABRINK was one of the most successful undercover operations the CIA ever conducted. Indonesia was then under the rule of President Sukarno, whose army, navy and air force were being armed by the Soviet Union. The CIA had penetrated the Indonesian navy and was paying one of its top officers \$30,000 a year to hand over Soviet weapons and training manuals as soon as they arrived. No fewer than 29 other Indonesian naval officers were being paid by the CIA to help him.

In between two tours in Indonesia, Barnett served for two years at CIA headquarters in Langley, where he helped direct HABRINK. Nobody knew more detail of its operation. His second tour ended at the Indonesian seaport of Surabaya, where he was chief of base. It was January 1970, Sukarno was dead; the Indonesians were no longer being armed by the Soviets and HABRINK had just been terminated after 10 years. Barnett decided to leave the CIA.

When he came back to the United States, Barnett took a job teaching English and coaching wrestling at the Kiskiminetas School, a boys prep school in Saltsburg, Pa. He'd been a teacher there in 1960-61, between leaving and rejoining the CIA. The headmaster had told Barnett there would always be a job for him. When Barnett had left for Indonesia, he told the headmaster he'd be back in a year.

But Barnett wasn't the same man when he came back to the "Kiski" School in 1970. He had a wife, a son and an urge to make money. The Kiski School wasn't the place to make it. For awhile, Barnett thought he might become headmaster of the school. When that didn't pan out, he decided to go back to Indonesia.

"I think he was disappointed in the